1. (Thrice Amended) In a method for preparing a vaccine comprising an immunogenic construct and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, the improvement comprising producing the immunogenic construct by a process comprising [the steps of]:

(a) activating a viral, fungal or bacterial polysaccharide with an organic cyanylating reagent selected from the group consisting of 1-cyano-4-(dimethylamino)-pyridinium tetrafluoroborate, N-cyanotriethyl-ammonium tetrafluoroborate, and p-nitrophenylcyanate, to form an activated carbohydrate; and

(b) coupling said activated carbohydrate directly or indirectly to a protein to form the immunogenic construct capable of stimulating an immune response.

~~5.~~ (Amended) A method according to claim ~~3~~, wherein said activating [step (a)] is carried out at a pH of from 8 to 10, and said coupling [step (b)] is carried out at a pH of from 7 to 9.

~~6.~~ (Amended) A method according to claim ~~3~~, wherein said activating [step (a)] is carried out in the presence of triethyl amine.

~~11.~~ (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein [the] <u>said</u> coupling [in step (b)] is done indirectly by covalently joining the polysaccharide to a bifunctional or heterofunctional spacer reagent, and covalently joining the protein to the spacer reagent.

~~15.~~ (Thrice Amended) A method for producing an immune response in a patient, comprising:

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(a) preparing a vaccine comprising an immunogenic construct and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, wherein the immunogenic construct is produced by: [steps including] (i) activating a viral, fungal or bacterial polysaccharide with an organic cyanylating reagent selected from the group consisting of 1-cyano-4-(dimethylamino)-pyridinium tetrafluoroborate, N-cyanotriethyl-ammonium tetrafluoroborate, and p-nitrophenylcyanate, to form an activated carbohydrate, and (ii) covalently joining said activated carbohydrate to a protein to form the immunogenic construct ~~capable of stimulating an immune response; and~~

(b) administering the vaccine to said patient.

17. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim ~~16~~, wherein said activating [step] is carried out in the presence of triethyl amine.

REMARKS

Entry of this Amendment and reconsideration of the Final Office Action dated December 11, 1996 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-8, and 10-21 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, minor editorial amendments are made to the claims to place them in a preferred form. No new matter is included in this Amendment. No new issues that would require further searching and/or consideration are raised by these changes.

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